

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6992

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16751

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ID, PT, RP, UR, CH, XC

SUBJ: SOVIET RELATIONS WITH INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

REF: JAKARTA 14250

1. SUMMARY: POLITICAL COUNSELOR CALLED ON ALEKSEI OKONISHNIKOV, DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE SECOND FAR EAST DIVISION OF THE SOVIET MFA, ON NOVEMBER 19 TO DISCUSS CURRENT SOVIET VIEWS OF INDONESIA AND ITS NEIGHBORS. DURING CONVERSATION OKONISHNIKOV REASSERTED MOSCOW'S OPPOSITION TO FOREIGN
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MILITARY BASES IN THE REGION AND ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN AT

EFFORTS TO TURN ASEAN INTO A MILITARY ALLIANCE. HE DESCRIBED SOVIET-INDONESIAN RELATIONS AS "NORMAL," BUT SAID THAT IMPROVEMENTS SINCE 1965 HAD BEEN VERY GRADUAL AND STILL LIMITED. ECONOMIC AID IS BEING RESUMED UNDER THE AGREEMENT SIGNED DURING FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK'S VISIT LAST YEAR, BUT THE QUESTION OF MILITARY AID HAS NOT COME UP, HE SAID. ON TIMOR, HE SAID THAT THE SOVIETS FAVOR SELF-DTERMINATION BUT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT INDONESIA WOULD EXPECT ANY REGIME TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH JAKARTA. THE SOVIETS ARE READY TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PHILIPPINES, HE SAID, BUT THE TIMING WAS UP TO MANILA. PRESIDENT MARCOS HAS INDICATED THAT HE WANTS TO VISIT MOSCOW BUT ONLY DURING WARM WEATHER. END SUMMARY.

2. POLITICAL COUNSELOR OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY ASKING ABOUT SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD CHINESE POLICY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA GENERALLY AND INDONESIA IN PARTICULAR. OKONISHNIKOV REPLIED THAT SOVIET POLICY DOES NOT DEPEND ON THE PRC AND THAT PEKING'S RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA DIFFER WIDELY, ALTHOUGH THEIR OVERALL POLICY IS ONE OF SUBVERSION AND HEGEMONY. ASKED WHETHER THIS VIEW OF "THREAT" FROM PEKING IN ANY WAY ALTERED MOSCOW'S VIEW OF THE DESIRABILITY OF A U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE REGION, OKONISHNIKOV REPLIED THAT SOVIET POLICY OPPOSES "FOREIGN BASES" EVERYWHERE AND THIS APPLIED TO ASIA IN PARTICULAR. "WE DO NOT ACCEPT THE THEORY OF A POWER VACUUM IN THE AREA," HE SAID.

3. HE DESCRIBED SOVIET TIES WITH INDONESIA AS "NORMAL," AND SAID THERE HAS BEEN A GRADUAL IMPROVEMENT. A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS HAD RECENTLY TRAVELLED BOTH WAYS, INCLUDING THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS IN 1974, MALIK'S VISIT LAST DECEMBER, A GROUP OF SOVIET ASIAN SCHOLARS AND A VISIT TO MOSCOW BY A DELEGATION FROM THE INDONESIAN INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES. THE SOVIET UNION BUYS A LARGE AMOUNT OF INDONESIAN RUBBER, HE POINTED OUT, BUT APART FROM THAT INDONESIA PRODUCES LITTLE WHICH THE SOVIET UNION NEEDS. CURRENT PROSPECTS FOR INCREASES IN TRADE ARE LIMITED, OKONISHNIKOV SAID.

4. THE NEW AID AGREEMENT SIGNED DURING FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK'S VISIT WAS A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD. EXPERTS HAVE
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DISCUSSED THE PROPOSED PROJECTS, HE SAID, AND CONTRACTS WILL SHORTLY BE SIGNED. (THE ANNOUNCEMENT IN REFTEL HAD NOT YET BEEN MADE.) HE SAID THAT MILITARY AID HAD NOT RESUMED SINCE 1965 AND THAT "THE QUESTION HAS NOT ARISEN."

5. ON TIMOR HE SAID THAT THE SOVIET "PRINCIPLED POSITION" WAS THAT THE PEOPLE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DECIDE THEIR OWN FATE. WHEN MALIK WAS HERE LAST YEAR, HE STATED INDONESIA'S

POSITION AND THE SOVIETS STATED THEIRS, OKONISHNIKOV SAID. THE SOVIET POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED IN THE MEANTIME. HE NOTED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE "TIMOR INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT" WERE SCHEDULED TO HOLD TALKS WITH THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES AROUND THE END OF NOVEMBER AND SAID THAT THIS MIGHT IMPROVE THE SITUATION. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT INDONESIA HAD A NATURAL INTEREST IN DEVELOPMENTS IN TIMOR AND THAT ANY SUCCESSOR REGIME WOULD HAVE TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH JAKARTA.

6. TURNING TO ASEAN HE SAID THAT MOSCOW IS CONCERNED ABOUT "RECENT TRENDS," PARTICULARLY STATEMENTS MADE IN INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES, WHICH PROPOSED MAKING ASEAN AN ORGANIZATION OF MILITARY COOPERATION. THIS, HE SAID, WOULD BE A NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENT. MOSCOW HAS NO PROBLEMS, HOWEVER, WITH CLOSER REGIONAL COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND OTHER NON-MILITARY AREAS. HE NOTED THAT ASEAN IS HANDLED BUREAUCRATICALLY IN THE SOVIET MFA UNDER TWO DIFFERENT DIVISIONS, THE SECOND FAR EAST AND THE SOUTHEAST ASIA DIVISIONS, AND "WE OFTEN ARGUE" ABOUT ASEAN QUESTIONS. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASEAN AS AN ORGANIZATION RESTS WITH THE SOUTHEAST ASIA DIVISIONS, SINCE THEY DEAL WITH THREE OF THE FIVE MEMBER STATES.

7. MOVING TO THE PHILIPPINES, HE SAID THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IS UP TO MANILA. "WE ARE READY," HE SAID, BUT THE FILIPINOS SEEM NOT TO BE IN ANY HURRY. CONTACTS ON THE SOCIAL AND UNOFFICIAL LEVEL CONTINUE: TWO SOVIET CORRESPONDENTS (TASS AND PRAVDA) ARE STATIONED IN MANILA, HE POINTED OUT, AND A DELEGATION FROM THE SOVIET FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY VISITED THE PHILIPPINES RECENTLY. OKONISHNIKOV SAID THAT THE PROPOSAL FOR A VISIT BY PRESIDENT MARCOS HAD NEVER BEEN MADE CONCRETE. MARCOS SAID THAT HE WANTS TO COME, BUT ONLY WHEN THE WEATHER IS WARM. WHEN THIS CAME UP LAST SUMMER IT WAS TOO LATE TO MAKE PROPER ARRANGEMENTS, AND NOW IT IS CONFIDENTIAL

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WINTER. OKONISHNIKOV SAID THAT IF MARCOS IS REALLY "SENSITIVE TO THE COLD," AS HE MAINTAINS, HE WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO WAIT A WHILE LONGER.

8. OKONISHNIKOV WAS VERY CORDIAL THROUGHOUT THE MEETING. HE WELCOMED THE EXCHANGE AND LOOKED FORWARD TO FURTHER MEETINGS. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR INDONESIA, HE HAS NEVER SERVED THERE. HE COMES TO THE SECOND FAR EAST DIVISION (JAPAN AND INSULAR SOUTHEAST ASIA) BY WAY OF JAPAN, WHERE HE HAS SERVED TWICE. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED IN THIS MEETING BY ANATOLIY KHMENITSKIY, THE DESK OFFICER FOR INDONESIA, WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE CONVERSATION.
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